



MONTHLY UPDATE

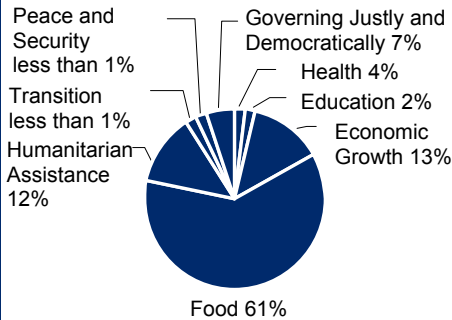
April 2010

Elections Offer Millions of Sudanese the First Opportunity in Their Lives to Vote

This month, Sudan's first multiparty elections since 1986 fulfilled a major requirement of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that ended the 22-year, north-south civil war, giving millions of Sudanese the first opportunity in their lives to vote. The election included contests for national, state, and southern Sudan legislatures, state governors, president of Sudan, and president of the regional Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS).



**USAID Assistance to Sudan
FY 2009**



Peace and Security	\$6.7
Governing Justly and Democratically	\$72.7
Health	\$47.1
Education	\$25.5
Economic Growth	\$140.8
Food Aid	\$679.7*
Humanitarian Assistance	\$127.6*
Transition	\$4.3
TOTAL	\$1,104.4

Note: Amounts in millions

* Includes eastern Chad



Voters in Juba, Sudan, look for their names on a list of registered voters at a polling station during Sudan's first multiparty elections in 24 years.
Photo: Ruth Buckley/USAID

USAID supported key areas of the electoral process—technical and material support for election administration, including training of registration and polling staff and supply of polling materials; civic participation, including voter education, political party capacity building, media assistance, and support to Sudanese organizations for domestic election observation; international election observation; and census administration prior to the elections.

In preliminary statements issued shortly after the end of the polling period, some international observer missions, including The Carter



Center—which is funded by a community of donors including USAID—and the European Union said the process did not meet international standards. These groups also noted some positive elements of the elections, including relatively high levels of participation by citizens, civil society, and political parties, as well as the importance of the elections as a key element of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

USAID continues to provide support for a series of elections in remaining constituencies that were postponed due to candidate deaths and delivery of incorrect ballots, as well as state legislative assembly elections in Gezira and Southern Kordofan.

USAID is also providing technical assistance to other political processes that are mandated by the CPA—the referenda on the future status of southern Sudan and Abyei, scheduled for January 2011, and popular consultations for Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states. USAID referenda assistance is already prepositioned through existing partners and mechanisms for timely support. Programs will build on activities begun in support of the peace process in 2004. Support will focus on technical assistance for administration of the referenda and popular consultations; civic participation for all citizens to effectively engage in the processes; and domestic and international observation. USAID has been supporting preparations for the popular consultation processes since 2008, including sponsoring study tours to Indonesia and Kenya that offered citizens and officials from Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states the opportunity to learn about similar processes in other countries. ♦



Poll workers at a voting site in Juba, Sudan, assist one voter as another voter (upper left) fills out his ballot. Photo: Ruth Buckley/USAID



An election poster in Juba, Sudan, encourages voter participation. Photo: Ruth Buckley/USAID

Peace Conference Addresses History of Violence along North-South Border Zone

For decades, the disputed, oil-rich border regions between northern and southern Sudan have witnessed scenes of violence as disputes over water and access to grazing land erupt into brutal tribal conflicts. But early this year, leaders from the Dinka Malual of Northern Bahr el Ghazal and the Rezeigat of South Darfur came together to lay out a joint plan to end the violence.

From January 22 to 25, senior leaders of the two tribes met in Aweil, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, for a grassroots peace conference aimed at fostering dialogue and reconciliation. The governors of Northern Bahr el Ghazal and South Darfur jointly organized the conference with USAID facilitation to provide a forum for mediation between the two groups, with the hope of reducing tension and increasing cross-border cooperation.

The Dinka Malual and Rezeigat have experienced a long history of conflict, which was exacerbated by Sudan's north-south civil war. Driven by drought, desertification, and the demands of their large cattle herds, the Rezeigat allied with the Sudan Armed Forces and fought against the Dinka Malual to secure control over seasonal migration routes in the south. These attacks provoked the Dinka Malual to attack Rezeigat herders and villagers in an



Northern Bahr el Ghazal Governor Paul Malong displays to a crowd gathered in Aweil the joint communiqué on community security issued in January by the Dinka Malual and Rezeigat. Photo: Winrock International

escalating cycle of conflict. Although the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, signed in 2005, officially put an end to fighting between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, regional clashes continued—driven largely by a scarcity of water for cattle herds, easy access to small arms, and lack of government mediation between the two sides.

Aware of the challenges of organizing such a gathering, Northern Bahr el Ghazal Governor Paul Malong contacted USAID's Building Responsibility for the Delivery of Government Services (BRIDGE) program and outlined areas of logistical and financial support needed to make the conference a success. For BRIDGE, it was a unique opportunity to support a Sudanese-led initiative that not only yielded peace dividends, but also demonstrated a new capacity on the part of local government to be responsive to citizens' needs. USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives, Pact Sudan, and several other donor organizations also contributed to the conference preparation.

By late January, representatives from both tribes began to arrive in Aweil. Despite some tense final moments when it was revealed that the Governor of South Darfur and several senior political figures would be unable to attend, the conference continued as planned. Dinka and Rezeigat members shared traditional songs and dances between formal discussions and negotiations. In the end, the 175 conference participants issued a joint communiqué outlining the major community security priorities and asking for greater international assistance to achieve these goals. In particular, the communiqué called

for better management of seasonal grazing routes, the creation of a jointly administered traditional court to resolve disputes, and a prohibition against either community carrying small arms onto the other's territory.

This spring, the Northern Bahr el Ghazal state director of resolutions, an elected official, confirmed that his state's government and the Rezeigat of South Darfur adopted the resolutions from the conference. Activities to implement the new peace accord will begin soon.

The success of the conference is a victory not only for the Dinka Malual and Rezeigat, who have a new opportunity for peaceful coexistence and cooperation, but for other tribes for whom this experience may serve as an example. It showcased the capacity of local government leaders to mediate and resolve disputes, and in doing so, directly respond to the needs and concerns of their constituents. Perhaps the most significant achievement of the conference was that it was initiated through local efforts. In overcoming an array of obstacles, the leaders of both communities showed that peace and politics are not mutually exclusive in Sudan. ♦

Access to Potable, Reliable Water Sources Increasing through USAID-Trained Borehole Repair “Super Technicians”

Though southern Sudan has numerous lakes and rivers, the vast majority of its population still does not have access to a reliable source of clean water, and conflict during the civil war impeded progress. Thousands of Sudanese must walk several hours to reach the nearest water source.

When the borehole in Aweng town in Warrap state broke down, Akual Kuec, a mother of four, had to walk three hours to the nearest water source. “After our borehole stopped working, my family and I had to walk very far to collect water,” said Kuec. “We [woke] up very early in the morning so that we could be back in our village by midday. This was difficult for all, especially for my small children who had to wait until I returned from fetching water to eat. The elder children had to stop attending school, as I needed them to help me transport the heavy jerry cans.”



USAID-trained “super technicians” practice hand pump repair that benefits the entire community. Photo: Winrock International

To address the critical need for water, USAID’s Building Responsibility for the Delivery of Government Services (BRIDGE) program is working with communities to construct, rehabilitate, and manage water-supply boreholes. BRIDGE helped establish community-based water user committees to manage the boreholes, and trains “super technicians”—local men and women who learn to repair the water sites. The super technicians are provided with repair kits and extensive training on hand pump repair and maintenance to enable them to respond quickly to problems.

With the help of super technicians, the borehole closest to Kuec has been repaired, along with 191 others across Warrap, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, and Unity states.

“Since our borehole was fixed, I have been able to fetch water and still have time to prepare food for my children, send them to school, and work in the vegetable garden,” Kuec said.

Community members now not only have more convenient and reliable access to water, but have also been able to establish a run-off channel to support vegetable production and provide drinking water for livestock.

“Since we [previously] only had enough water for ourselves, our vegetable gardens began to wilt very shortly after the borehole broke down,” Kuec said. “Luckily, we did not lose any of our crops, since the

super technicians fixed our borehole just in time. Today, we are working together to keep the plot irrigated and properly cultivated. This will help us harvest more vegetables to feed our families.” ♦

Training Program Builds Ties among Youth in Jonglei

During the harsh dry season, the sun-baked soil of the southern Sudanese state of Jonglei is all too often the setting for violent clashes between Lou Nuer and Jikany Nuer over scarce resources. Amid an upsurge in inter-ethnic conflict, youth from both groups, including some who were previously involved in violence and cattle rustling, recently gathered in Akobo to build bricks that will help lay the foundation for a more stable future.

With support from USAID, 52 youth received training in compressed-soil blockmaking on four newly donated machines. Working together, the youth made 14,000 blocks in just over two weeks. Some of the youth are now employed in a follow-on activity to rehabilitate the Akobo County headquarters office building using blocks made during the training. These youth will also form the nucleus of a for-profit business association USAID will support to engage in construction projects to develop this severely poor area.



Lou Nuer and Jikany Nuer youth in Jonglei state receive USAID training to use the compressed-soil blockmaking machine. Photo: AECOM International Sudan



The blockmaking initiative has provided idle youth with tools and training for locally sustainable economic activity, and constitutes an example of practical peacebuilding aimed at changing lives and landscapes. Since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2005, an absence of positive change on the ground has led to a large class of disaffected and disempowered youth in the region. These youth turn to cattle raiding for money and are drawn into conflict over natural resources with neighboring communities, a trend made worse by the ready supply of small arms. The resulting inter-tribal conflict in southern Sudan, much of which occurred in Jonglei, killed an estimated 2,500 people in 2009.

Before the two-week training program began, local organizers planned to house the Lou and Jikany youth in separate accommodations because of a spate of attacks between the two communities in the previous year and subsequent tension. But when the Jikany youth arrived from their cattle camps, their Lou colleagues insisted that both groups stay together under one roof for the duration of the training. By breaking down ethnic and economic barriers, local capacity-building programs like the one in Akobo can help replace conflict with cooperation. ♦

Wau Water Treatment Facility to Expand with USAID Support

Located along the Jur River in Western Bahr el Ghazal, Wau is one of the largest towns in southern Sudan, marked by rapid growth since people began returning home after the 2005 signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, which ended Sudan's decades-long civil war. But Wau's rapidly increasing population places extreme strain on its inadequate water infrastructure.

The existing water treatment plant was built in the 1930s and currently serves 500 households. USAID's Sudan Infrastructure Services Project (SISP) will break ground this year on the rehabilitation and expansion of a water treatment plant that benefits 100,000 people in Wau's residential neighborhoods, as well as government offices and private businesses—twice the output of the existing facility.



The water treatment plant in Wau, Western Bahr el Ghazal, which USAID will help expand and upgrade in a project to begin this year. Photo: Louis Berger Group, Inc.

"Investing in public infrastructure helps build healthy, strong communities for today and manage growth for the future," said Joseph Akol, Area Manager of the Wau Urban Water Corporation, which is partnering with USAID to implement the project. "The upgrades to Wau's clean water treatment plant will help ensure that local families have healthier drinking [water] for their children."

The planned expansion of the Wau water treatment plant is the largest single water project funded by USAID outside Juba, the regional capital of southern Sudan. The design of the water treatment plant has been completed by the SISP engineering team and a contract will soon be awarded to a qualified, local contractor. The project is being implemented by USAID's partner, the Louis Berger Group, Inc.

A water treatment plant similar to the one currently used in Juba will be constructed at the existing water utility in Wau. The addition of new facilities will improve and increase the utility's clean water production capacity. Upgrades to existing buildings and operations will help improve the utility's performance.

"Together with international donors and partners, we are renewing critical public infrastructure," said Poulino Adam Naro, State Minister of Physical Infrastructure and Urban Development in Western Bahr El Ghazal state. "USAID's support of this project shows that the American people are committed to ensuring clean, safe water for the southern Sudanese people." ♦